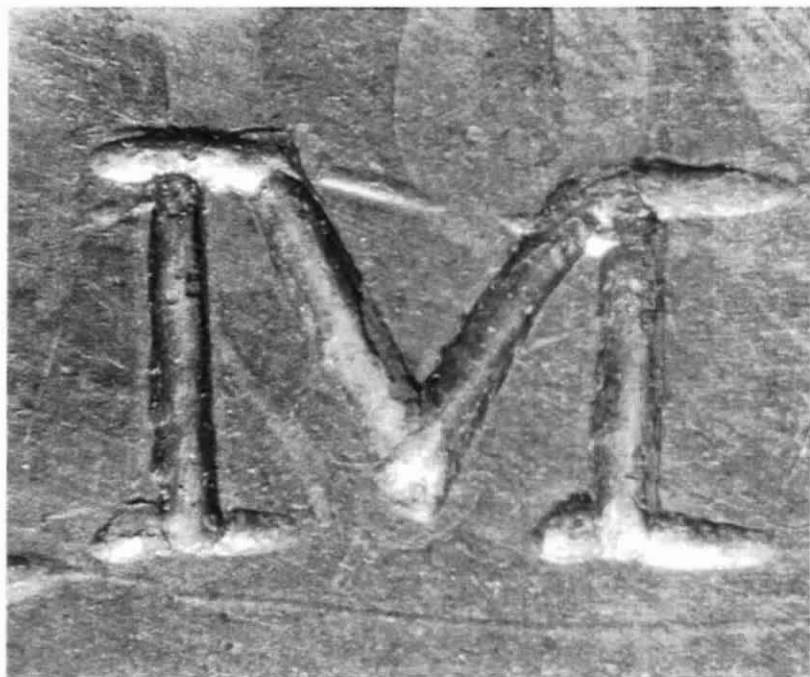


# THE C4 NEWSLETTER

*Colonial Coin Collectors Club*



*Spring 1996*

*Volume 4 number 1*

**The C4 Newsletter** Volume 4, number 1.

A quarterly published by  
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The cover illustration is a photomicrograph of the obverse die of the Betts "New Hampshire" copper. Photos of the dies and struck coins are on pages 15 and 16.

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I seem to be left with space. Help me avoid this next time. Send an article. I do have a few items folks have sent me which I am working with, such as Neil Rothschild's "Copper Posts from Compuserve." But the pipeline doesn't have as much in it as there should be. You need not discover a new die variety to have something worth writing. Think about what you enjoy reading. What can you share that others might enjoy and learn from?

Editor's Notes and News

*Dan Freidus*

Jeff Hall has donated a copy of "Studies on Money in Early America" (Eric Newman and Richard Doty, editors. 1976, ANS) to our library. I thank him on everyone's behalf, especially those who don't own a copy of this excellent collection of essays which is, unfortunately, out of print.

Thanks to all who paid their 1996 dues in response to the flyer included with the last issue. You should have gotten a reminder with this issue if you hadn't paid your dues by April 26. Membership in C4 is \$20 per year (\$5 extra if you want your newsletters mailed first class). Life membership is \$400. Send dues to the C4 treasurer: Don Mituzas, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

C4 members may place free classified ads up to 13 lines (a third of a page). You may include a photo with your ad at our cost (\$5) and still have 13 lines of text. Black and white photo needed, high contrast reproduces best. Size can be adjusted to fit.

Display ads are available at the following prices:

	1 issue	2 issues	4 issues	copy size
1 page	\$50	\$75	\$125	4-1/2" x 7-1/2"
1/2 page	\$30	\$45	\$75	4-1/2" x 3-3/4"
1/4 page	\$15	\$25	\$40	3-1/2" x 1-7/8"

Please send a check with ad copy. I can accept camera-ready copy or computer files in various formats for display ads. For a very modest fee I can accept camera-ready text and have our print shop scan photos, resize and place into your ad. Contact me for more info. Everyone benefits when we can illustrate lots of coins in both ads and articles so I will do what I can to encourage photos.

Measuring the diameter or thickness of a coin is a difficult task, mainly because precision measuring instruments are generally made of hardened steel, the very same material used for coinage dies. One slip and you've made a permanent mark on that 200 year old artifact. The alternative always used to be using a plastic ruler: safe but not very accurate.

Mitutoyo, a Japanese manufacturer of top quality precision instruments, now makes serious plastic electronic calipers. Less than half the price of steel ones and, even more important, they can't scratch your coins. I've been using them for about a year and they are fantastic. They have a 6" capacity and measure to 0.001". At the press of a button they can operate in metric, 150mm capacity by 0.02mm. They come with a long lasting battery (replacements readily available anywhere that sells electric watches).

The best source I know of for these is Victor Machinery. I haven't seen a lower price anywhere else, but I should still mention that I used to be a partner in this company and it is now run by my brother, Marc. The 6" plastic electronic calipers are model 700-103-B. Price is \$39 +\$5 shipping. (They are light, so if you're ordering more than one, call to see how much you'll save on shipping.) Victor Machinery Exchange, Inc., 251 Centre St., New York, N.Y. 10013 phone 800-723-5359. (email: victornet@earthlink.net World Wide Web: <http://www.victornet.com>) If you're interested in other tools, ask them to throw a catalog in the box.

In the last issue I promised an annotated bibliography of doctoral dissertations relevant to early American numismatics. I have been working on it, but it's not ready yet. I'll tempt you by mentioning just a few. Actually, the first graduate thesis I ran across in my numismatic research was a Master's thesis from Trinity College. Creel Richardson's 1928 work on "A History of the Simsbury Copper Mines" led me to much information relating to the

Higley coppers. Phil Mossman, via his ANS tome, referred me to John Flannagan's "Trying Times: Economic Depression in New Hampshire, 1781-1789", and Louis Maganzen's "Economic Depression in Maryland and Virginia, 1783-1787", both excellent resources in trying to understand the era which generated so many of the coppers we collect and study. One of Peter Gaspar's students, Mary Striegel, produced "Residual Stresses in Numismatics", a superb technical report of some uses of X-ray diffraction analysis, which can be used to learn about the methods used to manufacture a given coin. I'll have more information on the bibliography of dissertations as the project develops further.

### **BUILDING YOUR REFERENCE LIBRARY**

Bidding in one of our mail-bid sales of numismatic literature is one of the easiest and best ways to acquire needed reference material.

As a member of C4, you are eligible to receive a complimentary catalog for our next sale. Please send us your name and address so that we may add you to our mailing list.

"Knowledge is the key to enrichment!"

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## C4 Elections

You should receive a ballot with this issue in the mail. Members whose dues are paid up are encouraged to vote. If you haven't paid your 1996 dues yet, you may include them in the envelope with your votes. The following are the nominees who have agreed that they will serve if elected. Thanks to all of them. A reminder that there are also unelected posts for volunteers, especially in connection with the annual convention coming up this fall, which takes a lot of work to pull off.

President: Dennis Wierzba

Treasurer: Tom Madigan  
Angel Pietri

Secretary: John Lorenzo

Region 1 representative: Jim Skalbe

Region 2 representative: David Palmer  
Ray Williams

Region 3 representative: Stan Stephens

Region 4 representative: Ken Mote

Region 5 representative: Mary Sauvain

Region 6 representative: Jim Goudge

Region 7 representative: Rob Retz

*Region 8 members have decided that Oregon no longer needs to be its own region. They have requested that it merge with region 7. This seems to be the wishes of the members being represented. Therefore, members from Oregon, Washington, and B.C. should all vote in the region 7 election, pending approval of the board for the creation of the new region 7 comprised of the old region 7 plus the old region 8.*



**The Second Annual C4 Convention**

October 11-13, 1996.

10 am -7 pm Friday & Saturday. 10 am -4 pm Sunday

held in conjunction with

Middle Atlantic Numismatic Association (MANA) at  
South Jersey Expo Center, 2323 Route 73

Pennsauken, New Jersey

**Highlights Include:**

Educational Seminars And Exhibits

Blockbuster Colonial Auction By

McCawley And Grellman (M+G) (Saturday 6 pm)

NJ Copper Symposium IV (Friday 5 - 10 pm)

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C4 carpooling between Clarion and Expo Center

Volunteers needed for lot viewing, C4 table, etc.

Copper dealers needed for C4 rows on main bourse floor

Consignments being accepted for M+G colonial auction

General Chairman: Dennis Wierzba [REDACTED]

Bourse Chairman: Greg Ruby [REDACTED]

Education And Exhibits: Bijan Anvar [REDACTED]

C4 Dealer Contact: Tom Rinaldo [REDACTED]

NJ Symposium: RSVP Ray Williams [REDACTED]

C4 Reception (Thursday 7:30 pm):

RSVP Roger Moore [REDACTED]

## *Message from the President*

*Angel Pietri*

Well! It comes time to write my last message as president of this illustrious club. I am proud of what we as a club have achieved. I think the club stands on a solid foundation. In the next couple of months, you all will be selecting those members who will be responsible for guiding C4 in the next two years. Hopefully, the club will continue to flourish, expanding its base as well as its outreach. We already have a good newsletter and also a great editor in Dan. We need to make the newsletter great also by expanding membership input into it (more about this later). We have been successful also in obtaining a not-for-profit (tax-free) status, which should help us in being able to finance our mission. In addition, we were able to run a successful 1st convention last October which was very enjoyable and educational to a lot of you. We will be holding our second convention this fall. I hope to see more of you there.

Looking into the future is very difficult without someone like Merlin on our side, but I think the outlook for C4 is very good. However, there is one thing that could derail this; and that is membership apathy. One of the few frustrations I have had over the last couple of years has been this. Contributions to the newsletter have been slow in coming, while members send colonial-related articles to other publications that reach only a portion (50% at most) of the colonial enthusiasts who belong to C4. I am not referring to CNL, which is a very fine publication and reaches basically the same audience we reach. Our goal is not to compete with CNL but to supplement it. If members want to submit contributions to other publications, fine. But most of the time they can submit the material to The C4 Newsletter also. Any issues of copyright can be dealt with usually without much difficulty by Dan.

I have also received very few letters offering suggestions. Most of those have been written in a semi-apologetic tone. Is this apathy the result of members feeling intimidated? If it is the latter, I would hope to dispel this notion by saying, "Intimidation by whom?" The "experts?" The more recognizable names in the colonial community? I've got news for you. Most of those "experts" only think they are experts. Some other "experts" are experts only in very narrow areas of colonials. I am certainly no expert in any branch of colonials, yet happened to be selected as president. What am I trying to say with this? Simply that nobody should feel intimidated. If you happen to have an idea for a contribution to the newsletter, do not discard it as a stupid idea. Many times, you will be the only one who thinks it is stupid. And if it is somewhat stupid, so what?! If it helps to stimulate discussion it serves a purpose. So before you discard your ideas as stupid, feel free to give Dan a call and discuss it with him (I hope Dan doesn't mind my contributing his time). You don't have to present an Earth-shattering new concept. Personal opinions, anecdotes, interesting coins in your collection, or coins you happen to see at a coin show are all possible and legitimate contributions. Therefore, throw your fears to the wind!

Good luck to C4 in the future! Let's all put in our two bits to help the new board members build for our future.

*Comments from your editor: I whole-heartedly agree with virtually all of Angel's message. I know that I am not an expert in many areas of early American numismatics. I flip open a redbook quite often to look up some of the most basic information. Face it, this is a hobby. Most of us decide either to be generalists (i.e., type collectors) and know a little about a lot of things, or to be specialists and know a lot about a little. There are a few numismatic professionals who have the time to learn a lot about a lot, but that is a very small group. (As an aside, while in graduate school, I often heard that the process I was engaged in was learning more and more about less and less until I knew everything about nothing. I*

guess I succeeded, since I talked them into giving me a Ph.D.) The only numismatic subject on which I am confident that my research defines the state of the art is Higley coppers. But my numismatic interests are broad: I do know bits and pieces about most coinage of the Confederation era, colonial currency, minting technology, nondestructive analysis, the use of statistics in numismatics, database management and cataloging of collections, photography and other forms of collection documentation.

One of the reasons I agreed to become editor was to have more contact with other colonial collectors. So, yes, get in touch with me if you have ideas. (mail is best, or use email. give me your phone number if you'd like to discuss some ideas.) If you want they can always be published anonymously. But Angel is right that nobody should be intimidated. There are no stupid questions, only stupid answers!



## **C4 Benefit Mail Bid Sale**

The New Jersey coppers on the cover of the last issue were donated by Colonial Trading and sold to benefit C4. The Maris 6-D sold for \$80 and the Maris 38-Y sold for \$135. If you think that's low, you should bid the next time. If you think it's high, consider donating some coins to C4. Remember, it's tax deductible since we now have 501(c)(3) status from the IRS.



## **Identifying a Betts Copper**

**Dan Freidus**

Many of you have seen my April column in Coin World about one of the coppers fabricated by C. Wyllys Betts while he was a student at Yale in the early 1860s. Space and deadlines limited both my babbling and the photos I could

include. I'd like to show you photos of both of the dies for this piece, the specimen I was describing, as well as another specimen from the same dies.

For those who may have missed the Coin World column, here's the background: This winter I saw a "New Hampshire" copper (Breen 710) in a Centennial Auctions catalog. I was unsure exactly what this piece was, and clearly, Walter had been, too, as he catalogued it with this cryptic note; "Unique?... Genuineness doubted. The fabric suggests wooden dies hammered into any available blank." The illustration in Breen is a different specimen, so at least I knew it isn't unique. Wooden dies? The uneven detail suggests either a coining apparatus which couldn't supply sufficient pressure or dies made to simulate a worn coin. Die alignment may also have been the source of the unevenness, as in a hammer-struck coin. If the dies had been wood I'd expect to see some grain, since winter wood and summer wood differ dramatically in hardness. It is also unlikely that wooden dies could produce fine detail such as the harp strings or the sharp lettering. Suffice it to say that Breen's imagination was a powerful force. He didn't elaborate on the reasons he doubted its authenticity. The style of the lettering reminded me of the 1860s work of C. Wyllys Betts but I knew of no good reference which illustrated these pieces.

Breen noted that the specimen he illustrated was sold in the 1947 ANA auction of the Prann collection. This was an excellent collection of colonials poorly catalogued, which presumably contributed to the low prices realized, even by 1947 standards. The New Hampshire copper realized \$105 on a \$300 estimate, but that was still \$5 more than Numismatic Gallery could attract for any of the six (!) Higley coppers.

I was left without hard evidence until Mary Sauvain kindly reminded me that the dies for piece were sold by Stack's in

March 1993. They were catalogued as part of a collection of Betts fantasies made in the 1860s. In 1877 one of them (a "Novum Belgvim" copper) created a controversy, pitting Edouard Frossard and David Proskey (who believed that the coin was an authentic colonial) against Edward Cogan (who claimed that it was modern and that he even knew who made them). J.W. Scott published (in the November issue of his "Coin Collector's Journal") an article reprinting part of an 1864 Woodward auction catalog describing some of these fantasies. Betts wasn't named but Scott stated that his identity was an "open secret." Meanwhile Frossard was publishing an article in his November issue of "Numisma" describing the piece as genuine. Frossard stood his ground for a few months, finally giving in when Betts himself wrote saying that he had made the coin and many other fabrications. The most readily available discussion of Betts' work (though it doesn't mention the New Hampshire pieces) is in Don Taxay's "Counterfeit, Mis-Struck, and Unofficial U.S. Coins."

In the Stack's catalog, we see that the dies are simply copper coins which have been flattened or planed and then engraved on one side. Such a die could make very few impressions before succumbing to even the low pressure of Betts' hand-held hammer.

The current owner of the Betts New Hampshire dies was kind enough to lend them to me for study together with another specimen struck from these dies. The comparison of the 4 pieces is quite intriguing. The 2 struck pieces differ in that the Centennial specimen appears to be a stronger strike but more unevenly struck. It also has virtually no wear (but there are some scratches) while the other specimen shows quite a bit of wear, perhaps as a pocket piece. A comparison of the obverse die with the Stack's illustration shows that the piece has been damaged sometime in the past 3 years. Almost half of the non-engraved side now has deep irregular ruts. They are not,

however, red, which suggests that no metal was removed. Did someone try to strike another specimen? Did it succumb to the jaws of a vise? Will we ever know?

The cover illustration of this issue is a photomicrograph of the obverse die. While the engraving is definitely crude, it seems nonetheless the work of a sure hand. When I look at the products of these dies, I am simultaneously struck by the sharpness of some portions of the coins and the total lack of detail in other areas. This makes me realize how little I know about hammer-struck coins. What methods are used to maintain die alignment? Is this typically a trivial problem or the main difficulty in producing presentable hammer-struck coins? Were these Betts' first trials or the best he could do after much experimentation? He claimed to have donated 200 pieces to Yale and may very well have thrown away some examples or reground them to make more dies. Surely Betts acquired much knowledge in his foray into minting. Examining these 4 pieces suggests to me that perhaps one of the most overlooked parts of numismatics is the experimental realm. How much more would we know about copper of the Confederation if we were to try to make dies and planchets and strike some coins of our own? Would the realization that a rocker press was used to make large planchet Massachusetts silver have been common knowledge before Richard Doty's fine COAC paper if numismatists were in the habit of trying to recreate such coins? Just as archaeologists have discovered that you can understand Stone Age tools better if you try to use them, perhaps we can understand early American coins better if we try to recreate the methods that were used to make them.

Of course, I'd also like to see someone catalog and illustrate all the Betts fabrications. If you have any, please contact me.

I'd be glad to take photos and document them. Or just contact me if you know the location of any of them. Thanks.

Struck Specimen #2

Centennial Struck Specimen



***C. Wyllys Betts' "New Hampshire" Copper.***

Struck Specimens on this Page.

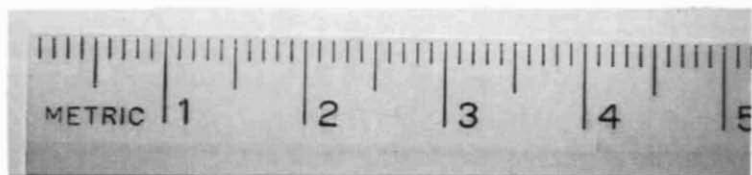
Dies on Facing Page.



Obverse Die



Reverse Die



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Comprised of items ranging from \$100 to \$25,000 in value overall this represents Early American's finest sale to date, in these important collector fields. A few individual highlights from this session include: George Washington's Military Commission to the First Commandant of West Point, a Three Language Ship's Paper signed by both George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, a remarkable Early Colonial Document directly relating to "The Freeman's Oath", the largest known Full Plate Tintype photograph of General George A. Custer, plus a 7th Cavalry Military Discharge document signed by "George A. Custer", a lovely Matisse signed Drawing, a very rare "First Stage" Renoir Etching and some twenty other notable works of art.

### SATURDAY • JUNE 1, 1996 • 6:00 PM

COLONIAL & CIVIL WAR DOCUMENTS, PHOTOGRAPHS,  
MAPS, ROMAN GLASS, MILITARIA, BROADSIDES & AMERICANA

This session is very diverse and should prove of significant interest to collectors of many eras in history from Roman times through the American Revolutionary War, the Civil War and beyond. An excellent selection of Revolutionary and Civil War Documents, BroadSides, Newspapers and historic Artifacts will be offered. Militaria including a number of Flinlock and percussion rifles and pistols will be sold, as well as Swords, Powder Horns, Uniforms and the like. A nice run of Civil War Era Tintypes and photographs, extraordinary letters and diaries, plus the signatures of many different Confederate and Union Generals will be catalogued for this important auction event.

### SATURDAY • JUNE 8, 1996 • MAIL BID

U.S. & WORLD COINS & CURRENCY • ENCASED POSTAGE STAMPS

Also on display will be approximately 500 lots of Colonial Coins and Currency, U.S. Coinage and Currency plus a nice selection of World Coinage to be sold in Early American's Mail Bid Auction, Closing one week later on Saturday June 8th.

Each complete catalog is accessible, cover to cover, through Early American's World Wide Web site on the Internet. Every item found photographed in the catalogue is shown, enlarged and in full color along with the complete description, Terms of Sale, bid form, bidding hints, etc. Early American was the first auction company, Worldwide to provide such and extensive service for its clients. Early American will also be accepting Consignments for its August 1996 Auction to be held in conjunction with the Republican National Convention in San Diego. For additional information please contact Mr. Dana Linett, president or Ron Guth, Early American's auction director.

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## *Colonial and Early American Coins in the Eliasberg Collection*

*Q. David Bowers*

### *Background*

The past several months of my life have been among the most enjoyable of my numismatic career. Beginning in autumn 1995 and ending in March 1996, I and others on the Bowers and Merena staff have had the coin collecting equivalent of visiting King Tut's tomb. Consigned to us for auction sale by Richard A. Eliasberg was a significant portion of the collection formed over a long period of years by his father, the late Louis E. Eliasberg, Sr.

Louis Eliasberg, a banker and financier, began collecting coins about 1925, and in the mid-1940s determined to do what no one else had ever done (and no one else will ever do again): to form a complete cabinet of United States federal issues by dates and mintmarks from 1793 onward. On November 7, 1950, this was accomplished with the acquisition of the sole remaining piece: the only known specimen of the 1873-CC Without-Arrows Liberty Seated dime. The collection was complete!

And, what a collection it was! The unique 1873-CC Without-Arrows dime was a neighbor of the finest known 1913 Liberty Head nickel, a gem Proof. Not far away was the only known example of the 1870-S \$3 gold piece, and nearby was the only 1822 \$5 gold coin in private hands. Gems abounded – from a prooflike 1796 without-pole half cent through the finest known 1793 Liberty Cap cent (Gem Mint State) continuing onward to such classics as the 1804 silver dollar and 1884 and 1885 trade dollars, on through gem Proof \$20 pieces. Wow!

In 1982 the writer had the privilege of cataloguing the gold portion of the Eliasberg Collection and offering it for public

auction sale. Now in 1995-1996 the focus is on the first part of the American series from colonials through dimes, plus pattern coins and territorial gold. In 1997 it is planned to complete the offering with the U.S. series from twenty-cent pieces through trade dollars plus tokens, medals, and currency. I understand from Chris Karstedt, our director of publicity, that a page of paid advertising about the sale will appear in this issue. If you would like to order the publications I refer you to it.

### ***Focus on Colonials***

Meanwhile, the focus of this article is on the colonial and early American coins acquired by Louis E. Eliasberg, Sr., for a period of a quarter century 1925-1950. While these pieces were not part of his main objective, and he did not aspire to completion as he did with the federal series, the colonial portion of his cabinet is immense in its content and importance.

The April 27, 1953, issue of *Life* magazine featured the Eliasberg Collection in an article titled "Gems From the Greatest Collection of U.S. Coins." Highlights from the cabinet were illustrated in color, including these representative pieces from the early American series, reflective of the owner's pride of possession:

1. (1652) Massachusetts "NE" (New England) silver shilling.
2. 1652 Massachusetts Pine Tree silver shilling, large planchet.
3. 1786 Vermont copper, landscape type.
4. Maryland silver sixpence circa 1659.
5. Carolina elephant token, Bolen copy in silver.
6. 1787 New York EXCELSIOR copper with state arms.
7. 1739 Higley copper, standing deer motif.
8. 1786 New Jersey copper.
9. 1787 Fugio cent, copper.
10. 1786 New York NON VI VIRTUTE VICI copper.
11. 1791 WASHINGTON PRESIDENT cent, copper.

12. 1792 Washington silver Getz "half dollar."
13. 1796 Myddelton token, silver.
14. 1776 Continental "dollar" in pewter.

This impressive list features pieces selected for their display value and constitutes, perhaps, 10% of the colonial cabinet.

While writing the recently-prepared catalogue for our May 20-22, 1996 sale of the Eliasberg collection from colonials through dimes (plus patterns and territorials) was a combined effort of the writer, Mark Borckardt, Andrew W. Pollock III, and several others, it fell to me to do the early American series. And, what a nice time I had doing it! In this article I will discuss the methodology.

### *Organizing the Colonials*

The first order of activity was to grade the colonial and early American coins. As readers of *The C-4 Newsletter* know well, there are no universally agreed upon standards for colonial issues. I recall in another context a Vermont copper that was graded Very Fine by one recognized expert in the series and About Uncirculated by another. For some pieces that are well struck, the task is easier. However, for pieces that have striking, design, or planchet idiosyncrasies the challenge is daunting.

Notwithstanding this, and equipped with a bit of experience in having graded the Garrett, Norweb, Taylor, and numerous other colonial cabinets, I proceeded with the Eliasberg collection pieces. Mark Borckardt joined me in the grading process. Mark's other recent activities include cataloguing the half cents, large cents, and certain early silver from the Eliasberg cabinet, and editing and updating the late Walter Breen's unpublished manuscript on 1793-1814 cents. Mark's credentials as a numismatist will stand the closest scrutiny.

Many hours later, we completed the grading process, having assigned adjectives and numbers to each coin. For example, the first lot in the sale, a New England (NE) silver shilling, was graded VF-30. How to grade an NE shilling, which in essence is mainly a blank planchet, would make a good discussion point at a numismatic seminar! *(Editor's note: I would also welcome letters on this topic for our next issue. Experience not necessary, since that would eliminate most of us. But I'd be surprised if there weren't a fair number of members with opinions about how to approach this problem.)*

I also marked significant pieces for photography, either 1x or 2x pictures and in some instances color photos as well. Lot numbers were assigned to each coin or group. When all was said and done, there were 109 lots, mostly consisting of single coins. Each lot was set up on my Macintosh computer. Basic information consisted of the lot number, coin variety, and grade.

### ***Cataloguing and Research***

Now came the "fun" part. Or, better stated, now came the part that was even more fun than organizing the coins.

One by one, each coin was examined in detail under magnification including, in many instances, under a stereo microscope. Although some of the colonial coins in the Eliasberg Collection had been studied by experts earlier—including by Walter Breen in the early 1950s—no one had inspected them closely in recent times. This in combination with the generally high grade of the Eliasberg Collection coins offered the opportunity to inspect the pieces carefully and make detailed notes as to die states, engraving characteristics, and other features. To the extent to which this has been successful, I hope that the catalogue will present much information not hitherto available in any single source.

Research included consulting references in the field from standard to obscure, the former including a file of back issues of *The Colonial Newsletter*, *The C4 Newsletter*, auction catalogues of our firm and others, Walter Breen's *Complete Encyclopedia*, various monographs published by Wayne Raymond, American Numismatic Society studies, and other publications. For a number of years I have been keeping miscellaneous notes and information on a data base, and this file was of great use as well. In addition, several colleagues were consulted on specific points and helped with clarifications and corrections.

My challenge was to describe each coin in a numismatically satisfactory manner while at the same time imparting some of the history, tradition, and background to each issue. When the information was available, pedigrees were also given.

When the cataloguing was completed, proofreading and checking took place in an effort to make the copy as error-free as possible, but also with the realization that no detailed publication in existence on colonial coins is such that someone reading it will not find some corrections or suggest some amplifications.

### *A Tour of the Eliasberg Colonial Coins*

While the catalogue itself devotes many dozens of pages to coin descriptions and speaks for itself, in this article I will mention some of the highlights.

The Massachusetts silver coinage is particularly rich in Pine Tree shilling varieties and comprises multiple examples that are among the finest of their kind. The silver coins of Maryland, circa 1659, include what is probably the finest quality trio ever to cross the auction block: high quality examples of the groat, sixpence, and shilling. Native Maryland silver coinage includes memorable issues of John



Chalmers (Annapolis silversmith) and the unusual day-dated threepence of Baltimorean Standish Barry.

St. Patrick's copper issues, Rosa Americana coins from the halfpenny to the twopence, Hibernia coppers, and Voce Populi coins include many high grade and rare specimens. The 1739 Higley copper threepence has been graded Fine and is a nice specimen of an issue which is usually seen in lower grades. *(Editor's note: this specimen is the Morris-Jenks specimen listed in my census; to my knowledge last auctioned by Henry Chapman in 1921. I didn't have a chance to confirm this until the Eliasberg catalog went to press.)*

Copper coins associated with New York state are particularly memorable and include NON VI VIRTUTE VICI and Indian / EXCELSIOR coppers of almost unbelievable quality, not to overlook a Mint State NOVA EBORAC copper. Vermont pieces include some of the finest ever auctioned, Connecticut coppers offer several different varieties mostly in high grades, the same description can be given for New Jersey coppers, and among 1787-1788 Massachusetts half cents and cents will be found gem Mint State examples.

A splendid 1776 Continental Currency "dollar," a 1796 silver Myddelton token, an original 1796 Castorland silver jeton, the remarkable and rare 1792 Getz Washington silver "half dollar," a gem 1787 Fugio copper with UNITED above and STATES below, and other pieces round out the offering.

It is my hope that the colonial and early American section of the Eliasberg Collection catalogue will at once be interesting reading and provide the opportunity acquire specimens of quality and rarity not often seen, and in many instances among the very finest in existence.



## A Colonial Site on the World Wide Web

*Dan Freidus*

A few years ago I stumbled upon Anton Masin's 1990 book "Numismatica Americana: Catalog of the Robert H. Gore, Jr. Collection of American Numismatics." This is a catalog of the coins which weren't included in the Bowers and Merena 1990 auction of Mr. Gore's collection. Over a period of years, he had been donating numismatic material to Notre Dame University, where it resides in the rare book division of the university library. Masin's catalog is quite idiosyncratic as he largely relied on Walter Breen's Encyclopedia as the main reference. This led to monikers such as "Rittenhouse-Eckfeldt's Wreath Large Cent" to describe a 1793 cent. The pre-federal section consists of about 150 coins and about 2 dozen pieces of colonial and Continental currency. Many coins are interesting and there are a few very nice pieces: a Continental Dollar, a Higley, an EF Pine Tree Shilling, but it could hardly be called a major collection. The cataloging often gives attributions by lot number in the Garrett or Roper auctions, rather than die variety from a standard reference! So it sat on my shelf, rarely used. I did try to get a photo of the Higley for my research, but the library was unable to provide one and I have not been able to squeeze in a trip to Indiana.

Then last month, Dave Cleaves sent me email notifying me that Notre Dame has set up a World Wide Web site which includes a catalog of the Gore collection, including photos of over 100 pieces. The address is

<http://www.nd.edu/~rarebook/coins/coin.intro.html>

I got a chance to look at the site last week. The cataloging is still unimpressive, but there is a lot of information organized in a very accessible format. There is an index by colony/state, but you can also search the files by keyword.

This site is also actively be further developed. Expect more information and images to be added.

The paper money is in a separate section of the web site:

<http://www.nd.edu/~rarebook/exhibits.html>

Both the coin and paper money files have photos together with text. The first photo that appears is a small, low resolution image to save time. A click on any such photo will grab a larger, high resolution image. I accessed the site using 2 different computers. The results with my old black and white Mac Classic II running Netscape were inadequate, while when I tried a Sun SPARCstation also running Netscape the images were fine. I assume the difference was simply having a color high resolution monitor and that it should look fine on any decent computer. The images are quite impressive to a user such as myself, who has been using email for 10 years, but usually relies on mail or FAX to send images. The weak link was actually the quality of the original photos (I have since received a copy of the Higley photos so I compared the photograph to the digitized version.) I will contact the Notre Dame library about permission to reprint some of their images in our next issue. In the meantime, take a look if you have web access. It will definitely be time well-spent.



### *I've looked at apathy from both sides now?*

*A response to John Griffiee*

In our last issue John Griffiee included in his minutes of the C4 meeting at F.U.N. a "numismatic puzzle" asking which side of the St. Patrick's farthing is the obverse:

*All who believe the king is on the obverse: raise your right hand.  
All who believe St. Patrick is on the obverse: raise your left hand.*

*All who don't give a damn: raise both hands.*

I, in turn, noted that I would be glad to publish the responses in this issue. I was greeted by a deafening silence! Stan Stephens emailed the only response. I still don't know John's opinion on the matter. Stan told me that he was at the F.U.N. meeting and was among those holding up both hands. He also mentioned that lot 1014 in Bowers and Merena's Sebring sale was a St. Patrick's halfpenny misattributed as Vlack 1A, while the coin is actually a Vlack 1B. Stan tells me that he pointed this out to B&M and it was announced at the sale, adding that Vlack chose numbers for the side with the King and letters for the side with St. Patrick.



## **UNCLASSIFIED ADS**

### *Colonial Coins for Sale or Trade.*

Many state coppers and various colonial issues. Especially interested in upgrading my Massachusetts silver. If you can help, please call or write:

Jeff Hall, [REDACTED]



### *For sale: Stereo Microscope.*

American Optical, "Cycloptic" model. 5 different internal objectives together with 15x eyepieces gives total magnification of 10x, 15x, 20x, 30x, or 40x. Also included is the AO illuminator and 3 accessories: a 2x adapter which makes the range 20x-80x, a base for transmitted light use (examining pond water or anything not opaque) and a mechanical stage (for examining traditional glass microscope slides). *Asking \$600* (the original cost was about \$1500, replacement cost for similar quality is now over \$2000).

Want to know more about it? Contact me if you're curious.

Dan Freidus, [REDACTED]

email: freidus@umich.edu [REDACTED]

Clement V. Schettino

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### Stack's:

**March 1994 (\$20)** very good colonial ref., all major series extensively represented.

**June 1994 (\$20)** excellent Connec. reference.

**Sept 1994(\$10)** nice little run of colonials, some v. rare, 4 Sommer Island pieces.

**December 1994 (\$20)** Excellent Fugio ref., a must!

**March 1995 (\$8)** Voce Populi, a few nice medals, Canadian tokens, & the silver center cent w/o silver center.

**June 1995 (\$15)** decent run of colonials, unique 1795 lg. circle "America" Confederatio, 78 lots Connec., most rare.

I'm interested in purchasing coins or early American currency accompanied by a certificate of authenticity from the "Colonial American Coin Club." These have a photo attached and are usually signed by Walter Breen and/or Don Taxay, etc. Also send any lists of your duplicates for sale with prices/terms.

# Walter Deleu,

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## FABULOUS COLONIAL AMERICAN COINS

The Eliasberg Collection catalogue begins with a fabulous offering of colonial and early American coins, including many Mint State and finest known pieces, as part of 1,348 coins to be auctioned from the Louis E. Eliasberg, Sr. Collection. Mr. Eliasberg did what no numismatist had done before or will ever do again: on November 7, 1950, with the addition of the unique 1873-CC Without Arrows Liberty Seated dime, his collection became complete with one of each date and mintmark from 1793 onward!

Not only was the Eliasberg Collection complete, its quality was unsurpassed with many rare gems, "finest knowns," and other treasures. Among colonial coins there are Massachusetts silver coins in depth, the finest set of Maryland silver ever auctioned, Mint State coppers including Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, and even Vermont, a silver 1792 Washington half dollar, and more. A breathtaking offering.

This portion of the Eliasberg Collection including colonial coins, patterns, territorial gold coins, federal half cents, large cents, small cents, two-cent and three-cent pieces, nickel five-cent pieces, half dimes,

and dimes has been described in a superbly illustrated 352-page Grand Format™ catalogue prepared under the direction of Q. David Bowers with Mark Borckardt, Andrew W. Pollock III, and other Bowers and Merena experts. This catalogue will forever stand as a reference and market guide. Each scarce and rare coin is carefully described together with information about its history, rarity, and significance. As a collector of colonial coins, you'll find this catalogue to be a delight to consult again and again over the years.

In addition to colonial and early American coins, there are great rarities in other series such as a gem prooflike 1796 No Pole half cent, gem Proof half cent rarities 1831-1849, a gem Mint State 1793 Liberty Cap cent, the finest known 1913 Liberty Head nickel, prooflike specimens of silver coinage of the 1790s, gem Proof Capped Bust and pre-1858 Liberty Seated coinage, the 1802 half dime, the unique 1873-CC Without Arrows dime, a gem Proof 1894-S Barber dime and others—plus a fabulous offering of pattern and territorial coins.

While there are rare colonial and other issues, there are common coins as well—as

both common and rare pieces were needed for completion. The Eliasberg Collection catalogue offers something for everyone. All of the coins have been carefully sealed and stored for decades, and some have been off the market for more than a century.

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity. There has never been a sale like this before. There will never be a sale like this again. You are cordially invited to be a part of it.



### Special Publications

In connection with the May sale of the Louis E. Eliasberg, Sr., Collection, we are preparing the following publications:

- **SALE CATALOGUE:** Deluxe, superbly-illustrated catalogue in the Bowers and Merena Grand Format™ style. Copies are available as follows:

- Softbound copy for use before and at the sale. Each: \$40.

- Limited-edition, numbered, Deluxe Hardbound Edition and price list to be sent after the sale. Each: \$100.

- **BIOGRAPHY:** A special book, *Louis E. Eliasberg, Sr.: King of Coins*, written by Q. David Bowers. Each: \$50.

### How to Participate

**Option 1:** A twelve-month subscription to the *Rare Coin Review*, and *The Coin Collector*, plus five Grand Format™ auction catalogues including our May Eliasberg Collection sale—over \$200 in individual cover prices—just \$95 to U.S. addresses, \$150 to Canadian addresses and \$200 elsewhere.

**Option 2:** For present and recent subscribers (if you include Option 1 with your order): You will receive the Deluxe Hardbound Edition of the Eliasberg catalogue (cover price \$100), and the biography, *Louis E. Eliasberg, Sr.: King of Coins* (cover price \$50). A value of \$150 for just \$99 (plus \$10 shipping and handling to U.S. addresses, \$25 elsewhere).

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Special notes: All orders are limited to the number of copies available and our confirmation of your order. Orders for multiple copies will be pro-rated if demand dictates.

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